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**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
CENTRAL DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA**

JIM CLEMMENS, TERRI
HERNANDEZ, AND MARIE
TOUSSAINT, INDIVIDUALLY AND
ON BEHALF OF ALL OTHERS
SIMILARLY SITUATED,

PLAINTIFFS,

VS.

AMERICAN HONDA MOTOR
COMPANY, INC.,

DEFENDANT.

Case No. 2:24-cv-09728-ODW-SKx

DISCOVERY MATTER

**[PROPOSED] PROTECTIVE ORDER
FOR CONFIDENTIAL
INFORMATION**

Magistrate: Hon. Steve Kim

Action Filed: November 12, 2024

Trial date: July 21, 2026

1. A. PURPOSES AND LIMITATIONS

Discovery in this action is likely to involve production of confidential, proprietary, or private information for which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecuting this litigation may be warranted. Accordingly, the parties hereby stipulate to and petition the Court to enter the following Stipulated Protective Order. The parties acknowledge that this Order does not confer blanket protections on all disclosures or responses to discovery and that the protection it affords from public disclosure and use extends only to the limited information or items that are entitled to confidential treatment under the applicable legal principles. The parties further acknowledge, as set forth in Section 12.3 (Filing Protected Material), below, that this Stipulated Protective Order does not entitle them to file confidential information under seal; Civil Local Rule 79-5 sets forth the procedures that must be followed and the standards that will be applied when a party seeks permission from the court to file material under seal.

B. GOOD CAUSE STATEMENT

This action is likely to involve trade secrets, customer, and other valuable research, development, commercial, financial, technical and/or proprietary information for which special protection from public disclosure and from use for any purpose other than prosecution of this action is warranted. Such confidential and proprietary materials and information consist of, among other things, confidential business or financial information, information regarding confidential business practices, or other confidential research, development, or commercial information (including information implicating privacy rights of third parties), information otherwise generally unavailable to the public, or which may be privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure under state or federal statutes,

1 court rules, case decisions, or common law. Accordingly, to expedite the flow of
2 information, to facilitate the prompt resolution of disputes over confidentiality of
3 discovery materials, to adequately protect information the parties are entitled to keep
4 confidential, to ensure that the parties are permitted reasonable necessary uses of
5 such material in preparation for and in the conduct of trial, to address their handling
6 at the end of the litigation, and serve the ends of justice, a protective order for such
7 information is justified in this matter. It is the intent of the parties that information
8 will not be designated as confidential for tactical reasons and that nothing be so
9 designated without a good faith belief that it has been maintained in a confidential,
10 non-public manner, and there is good cause why it should not be part of the public
11 record of this case.

12 13 2. DEFINITIONS

14 2.1 Action: This pending lawsuit, *Clemmens et al. v. American Honda*
15 *Motor Co., Inc.*, Case No 2:24-cv-09728, Central District of California.

16 2.2 Challenging Party: a Party or Non-Party that challenges the
17 designation of information or items under this Order.

18 2.3 “CONFIDENTIAL” Information or Items: information (regardless of
19 how it is generated, stored, or maintained) or tangible things that qualify for
20 protection under Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 26(c), and as specified above in
21 the Good Cause Statement.

22 2.4 Counsel: Outside Counsel of Record and In-house Counsel (as well as
23 their support staff).

24 2.5 Designating Party: a Party or Non-Party that designates information
25 or items that it produces in disclosures or in responses to discovery as
26 “CONFIDENTIAL.”

27 2.6 Disclosure or Discovery Material: all items or information, regardless
28 of the medium or manner in which it is generated, stored, or maintained (including,

1 among other things, testimony, transcripts, and tangible things), that are produced
2 or generated in disclosures or responses to discovery in this matter.

3 2.7 Expert: a person with specialized knowledge or experience in a matter
4 pertinent to the litigation who has been retained by a Party or its counsel to serve as
5 an expert witness or as a consultant in this Action.

6 2.8 In-house Counsel: attorneys who are employees of a party to this
7 Action. In-house Counsel does not include Outside Counsel of Record or any other
8 outside counsel.

9 2.9 Non-Party: any natural person, partnership, corporation, association,
10 or other legal entity not named as a Party to this action.

11 2.10 Outside Counsel of Record: attorneys who are not employees of a
12 party to this Action but are retained to represent or advise a party to this Action and
13 have appeared in this Action on behalf of that party or are affiliated with a law firm
14 which has appeared on behalf of that party, including support staff.

15 2.11 Party: any party to this Action, including all of its officers, directors,
16 employees, consultants, retained experts, and Outside Counsel of Record (and their
17 support staffs).

18 2.12 Producing Party: a Party or Non-Party that produces Disclosure or
19 Discovery Material in this Action.

20 2.13 Professional Vendors: persons or entities that provide litigation
21 support services (e.g., photocopying, videotaping, translating, preparing exhibits or
22 demonstrations, and organizing, storing, or retrieving data in any form or medium)
23 and their employees and subcontractors.

24 2.14 Protected Material: any Disclosure or Discovery Material that is
25 designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.”

26 2.15 Receiving Party: a Party that receives Disclosure or Discovery
27 Material from a Producing Party.
28

1 3. SCOPE

2 The protections conferred by this Stipulation and Order cover not only
3 Protected Material (as defined above), but also (1) any information copied or
4 extracted from Protected Material; (2) all copies, excerpts, summaries, or
5 compilations of Protected Material; and (3) any testimony, conversations, or
6 presentations by Parties or their Counsel that might reveal Protected Material.

7 Any use of Protected Material at trial shall be governed by the orders of the
8 trial judge. This Order does not govern the use of Protected Material at trial.

9 4. DURATION

10 Even after final disposition of this litigation, as defined in Section 13 (FINAL
11 DISPOSITION), the confidentiality obligations imposed by this Order shall remain
12 in effect until a Designating Party agrees otherwise in writing or a court order
13 otherwise directs.

15 5. DESIGNATING PROTECTED MATERIAL

16 5.1 Exercise of Restraint and Care in Designating Material for Protection.

17 Each Party or Non-Party that designates information or items for protection under
18 this Order must take care to limit any such designation to specific material that
19 qualifies under the appropriate standards. The Designating Party must designate for
20 protection only those parts of material, documents, items, or oral or written
21 communications that qualify so that other portions of the material, documents,
22 items, or communications for which protection is not warranted are not swept
23 unjustifiably within the ambit of this Order.

24 Mass, indiscriminate, or routinized designations are prohibited. Designations
25 that are shown to be clearly unjustified or that have been made for an improper
26 purpose (e.g., to unnecessarily encumber the case development process or to impose
27 unnecessary expenses and burdens on other parties) may expose the Designating
28 Party to sanctions.

1 If it comes to a Designating Party's attention that information or items that it
2 designated for protection do not qualify for protection, that Designating Party must
3 promptly notify all other Parties that it is withdrawing the inapplicable designation.

4 5.2 Manner and Timing of Designations. Except as otherwise provided in
5 this Order (see, e.g., second paragraph of Section 5.2(a) below), or as otherwise
6 stipulated or ordered, Disclosure or Discovery Material that qualifies for protection
7 under this Order must be clearly so designated before the material is disclosed or
8 produced.

9 Designation in conformity with this Order requires:

10 (a) for information in documentary form (e.g., paper or electronic
11 documents, but excluding transcripts of depositions or other pretrial or trial
12 proceedings), that the Producing Party affix at a minimum, the legend
13 "CONFIDENTIAL" (hereinafter "CONFIDENTIAL legend"), to each page that
14 contains protected material. If only a portion or portions of the material on a page
15 qualifies for protection, the Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected
16 portion(s) (e.g., by making appropriate markings in the margins).

17 A Party or Non-Party that makes original documents available for
18 inspection need not designate them for protection until after the inspecting Party has
19 indicated which documents it would like copied and produced. During the
20 inspection and before the designation, all of the material made available for
21 inspection shall be deemed "CONFIDENTIAL." After the inspecting Party has
22 identified the documents it wants copied and produced, the Producing Party must
23 determine which documents, or portions thereof, qualify for protection under this
24 Order. Then, before producing the specified documents, the Producing Party must
25 affix the "CONFIDENTIAL legend" to each page that contains Protected Material.
26 If only a portion or portions of the material on a page qualifies for protection, the
27 Producing Party also must clearly identify the protected portion(s) (e.g., by making
28 appropriate markings in the margins).

1 (b) for testimony given in depositions that the Designating Party identify
2 the Disclosure or Discovery Material on the record, before the close of the
3 deposition all protected testimony.

4 (c) for information produced in some form other than documentary and
5 for any other tangible items, that the Producing Party affix in a prominent place on
6 the exterior of the container or containers in which the information is stored the
7 legend "CONFIDENTIAL." If only a portion or portions of the information
8 warrants protection, the Producing Party, to the extent practicable, shall identify the
9 protected portion(s).

10 5.3 Inadvertent Failures to Designate. If timely corrected, an inadvertent
11 failure to designate qualified information or items does not, standing alone, waive
12 the Designating Party's right to secure protection under this Order for such material.
13 Upon timely correction of a designation, the Receiving Party must make reasonable
14 efforts to assure that the material is treated in accordance with the provisions of this
15 Order.

16 17 6. CHALLENGING CONFIDENTIALITY DESIGNATIONS

18 6.1 Timing of Challenges. Any Party or Non-Party may challenge a
19 designation of confidentiality at any time that is consistent with the Court's
20 Scheduling Order.

21 6.2 Meet and Confer. The Challenging Party Shall initiate the dispute
22 resolution process under Civil Local Rule 37-1 et seq.

23 6.3 The burden of persuasion in any such challenge proceeding shall be
24 on the Designating Party. Frivolous challenges, and those made for an improper
25 purpose (e.g., to harass or impose unnecessary expenses and burdens on other
26 parties), may expose the Challenging Party to sanctions. Unless the Designating
27 Party has waived or withdrawn the confidentiality designation, all parties shall
28 continue to afford the material in question the level of protection to which it

1 is entitled under the Producing Party's designation until the Court rules on the
2 challenge.

3
4 7. ACCESS TO AND USE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

5 7.1 Basic Principles. A Receiving Party may use Protected Material that
6 is disclosed or produced by another Party or by a Non-Party in connection with
7 this Action only for prosecuting, defending, or attempting to settle this Action.
8 Such Protected Material may be disclosed only to the categories of persons and
9 under the conditions described in this Order. When the Action has been
10 terminated, a Receiving Party must comply with the provisions of Section 13 below
11 (FINAL DISPOSITION).

12 Protected Material must be stored and maintained by a Receiving Party at
13 a location and in a secure manner that ensures that access is limited to the
14 persons authorized under this Order.

15 7.2 Disclosure of "CONFIDENTIAL" Information or Items. Unless
16 otherwise ordered by the Court or permitted in writing by the Designating Party, a
17 Receiving Party may disclose any information or item designated
18 "CONFIDENTIAL" only to:

19 (a) the Receiving Party's Outside Counsel of Record in this Action, as
20 well as employees of said Outside Counsel of Record to whom it is reasonably
21 necessary to disclose the information for this Action;

22 (b) the officers, directors, and employees (including In-house Counsel)
23 of the Receiving Party to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action;

24 (c) Experts (as defined in this Order) of the Receiving Party to whom
25 disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have signed the
26 "Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound" (Exhibit A);

27 (d) the Court and its personnel;

28 (e) court reporters and their staff;

1 (f) professional jury or trial consultants, mock jurors, and Professional
2 Vendors to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary for this Action and who have
3 signed the “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A);

4 (g) the author or recipient of a document containing the information or a
5 custodian or other person who otherwise possessed or knew the information;

6 (h) during their depositions, witnesses, and attorneys for witnesses, in
7 the Action to whom disclosure is reasonably necessary provided: (1) the deposing
8 party requests that the witness sign the form attached as Exhibit A hereto; and (2)
9 they will not be permitted to keep any confidential information unless they sign the
10 “Acknowledgment and Agreement to Be Bound” (Exhibit A), unless otherwise
11 agreed by the Designating Party or ordered by the Court. Pages of transcribed
12 deposition testimony or exhibits to depositions that reveal Protected Material may
13 be separately bound by the court reporter and may not be disclosed to anyone except
14 as permitted under this Stipulated Protective Order; and

15 (i) any mediator or settlement officer, and their supporting personnel,
16 mutually agreed upon by any of the parties engaged in settlement discussions.

17
18 8. PROTECTED MATERIAL SUBPOENAED OR ORDERED PRODUCED
19 IN OTHER LITIGATION

20 If a Party is served with a subpoena or a court order issued in other litigation
21 that compels disclosure of any information or items designated in this Action as
22 “CONFIDENTIAL,” that Party must:

23 (a) promptly notify in writing the Designating Party. Such notification
24 shall include a copy of the subpoena or court order;

25 (b) promptly notify in writing the party who caused the subpoena or order
26 to issue in the other litigation that some or all of the material covered by the
27 subpoena or order is subject to this Protective Order. Such notification shall include
28 a copy of this Stipulated Protective Order; and

1 (c) cooperate with respect to all reasonable procedures sought to be
2 pursued by the Designating Party whose Protected Material may be affected.

3 If the Designating Party timely seeks a protective order, the Party served with
4 the subpoena or court order shall not produce any information designated in this
5 action as “CONFIDENTIAL” before a determination by the court from which the
6 subpoena or order issued, unless the Party has obtained the Designating Party’s
7 permission. The Designating Party shall bear the burden and expense of seeking
8 protection in that court of its confidential material, and nothing in these provisions
9 should be construed as authorizing or encouraging a Receiving Party in this Action
10 to disobey a lawful directive from another court.
11

12 9. A NON-PARTY’S PROTECTED MATERIAL SOUGHT TO BE
13 PRODUCED IN THIS LITIGATION

14 (a) The terms of this Order are applicable to information produced by a
15 Non-Party in this Action and designated as “CONFIDENTIAL.” Such information
16 produced by Non-Parties in connection with this litigation is protected by the
17 remedies and relief provided by this Order. Nothing in these provisions should be
18 construed as prohibiting a Non-Party from seeking additional protections.

19 (b) In the event that a Party is required, by a valid discovery request, to
20 produce a Non-Party’s confidential information in its possession, and the Party is
21 subject to an agreement with the Non-Party not to produce the Non-Party’s
22 confidential information, then the Party shall:

23 (1) promptly notify in writing the Requesting Party and the Non-Party
24 that some or all of the information requested is subject to a confidentiality agreement
25 with a Non-Party;

26 (2) promptly provide the Non-Party with a copy of the Stipulated
27 Protective Order in this Action, the relevant discovery request(s), and a reasonably
28 specific description of the information requested; and

1 (3) make the information requested available for inspection by the Non-
2 Party, if requested.

3 (c) If the Non-Party fails to seek a protective order from this Court within
4 14 days of receiving the notice and accompanying information, the Receiving Party
5 may produce the Non-Party's confidential information responsive to the discovery
6 request. If the Non-Party timely seeks a protective order, the Receiving Party shall
7 not produce any information in its possession or control that is subject to the
8 confidentiality agreement with the Non-Party before a determination by the Court.
9 Absent a court order to the contrary, the Non-Party shall bear the burden and
10 expense of seeking protection in this Court of its Protected Material.
11

12 10. UNAUTHORIZED DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED MATERIAL

13 If a Receiving Party learns that, by inadvertence or otherwise, it has disclosed
14 Protected Material to any person or in any circumstance not authorized under this
15 Stipulated Protective Order, the Receiving Party must immediately (a) notify in
16 writing the Designating Party of the unauthorized disclosures, (b) use its best efforts
17 to retrieve all unauthorized copies of the Protected Material, (c) inform the person
18 or persons to whom unauthorized disclosures were made of all the terms of this
19 Order, and (d) request such person or persons to execute the "Acknowledgment and
20 Agreement to Be Bound" that is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

21 \\\

22 11. INADVERTENT PRODUCTION OF PRIVILEGED OR OTHERWISE
23 PROTECTED MATERIAL

24 When a Producing Party gives notice to Receiving Parties that certain
25 inadvertently produced material is subject to a claim of privilege or other protection,
26 the obligations of the Receiving Parties are those set forth in Federal Rule of Civil
27 Procedure 26(b)(5)(B). This provision is not intended to modify whatever
28 procedure may be established in an e-discovery order that provides for production

1 without prior privilege review. Pursuant to Federal Rule of Evidence 502(d) and
2 (e), insofar as the parties reach an agreement on the effect of disclosure of a
3 communication or information covered by the attorney-client privilege or work
4 product protection, the parties may incorporate their agreement in the stipulated
5 protective order submitted to the Court.

6
7 12. MISCELLANEOUS

8 12.1 Right to Relief. Nothing in this Order abridges the right of any person
9 to seek its modification by the Court in the future.

10 12.2 Right to Assert Other Objections. By stipulating to the entry of this
11 Protective Order, no Party waives any right it otherwise would have to object to
12 disclosing or producing any information or item on any ground not addressed in this
13 Stipulated Protective Order. Similarly, no Party waives any right to object on any
14 ground to use in evidence of any of the material covered by this Protective Order.

15 12.3 Filing Protected Material. A Party that seeks to file under seal any
16 Protected Material must comply with Civil Local Rule 79-5. Protected Material
17 may only be filed under seal pursuant to a court order authorizing the sealing of the
18 specific Protected Material at issue. If a Party's request to file Protected Material
19 under seal is denied by the court, then the Receiving Party may file the information
20 in the public record unless otherwise instructed by the court.

21
22 13. FINAL DISPOSITION

23 Final disposition shall be deemed to be the later of (1) dismissal of all claims
24 and defenses in this Action, with or without prejudice; and (2) final judgment herein
25 after the completion and exhaustion of all appeals, rehearings, remands, trials, or
26 reviews of this Action, including the time limits for filing any motions or
27 applications for extension of time pursuant to applicable law. After the final
28 disposition of this Action, within 60 days of a written request by the Designating

1 Party, each Receiving Party must return all Protected Material to the Producing
2 Party or destroy such material. As used in this subdivision, “all Protected Material”
3 includes all copies, abstracts, compilations, summaries, and any other format
4 reproducing or capturing any of the Protected Material. Whether the Protected
5 Material is returned or destroyed, the Receiving Party must submit a written
6 certification to the Producing Party (and, if not the same person or entity, to the
7 Designating Party) by the 60 day deadline that (1) identifies (by category, where
8 appropriate) all the Protected Material that was returned or destroyed; and (2)
9 affirms that the Receiving Party has not retained any copies, abstracts, compilations,
10 summaries, or any other format reproducing or capturing any of the Protected
11 Material. Notwithstanding this provision, Counsel are entitled to retain an archival
12 copy of all pleadings, motion papers, trial, deposition, and hearing transcripts, legal
13 memoranda, correspondence, deposition and trial exhibits, expert reports, attorney
14 work product, and consultant and expert work product, even if such materials
15 contain Protected Material. Any such archival copies that contain or constitute
16 Protected Material remain subject to this Protective Order as set forth in Section 4
17 (DURATION).

18
19 14. Any violation of this Order may be punished by any and all appropriate
20 measures including, without limitation, contempt proceedings and/or monetary
21 sanctions.

22
23 IT IS SO STIPULATED, THROUGH COUNSEL OF RECORD.

24
25 DATED June 11, 2025

26
27 By: /s/ Stephen J. Fearon, Jr. (with consent)
28 Stephen J. Fearon, Jr. (*pro hac vice*)
Paul V. Sweeny (*pro hac vice*)

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15 *Attorneys for Plaintiff*

16 DATED: June 11, 2025

17 By: /s/ Ian K. Edwards

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Attorneys for Defendant American Honda Motor Co, Inc.

1 FOR GOOD CAUSE SHOWN, IT IS SO ORDERED.

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3 DATED: June 12, 2025

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6 Honorable Steve Kim
7 United States Magistrate Judge
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ATTESTATION

In accordance with Local Rule 5-4.3.4(a)(2)(i), undersigned counsel, filer of this document on the Court's CM/ECF system, hereby attests that all other signatories hereto concur in the filing's content and authorized the filing.

/s/ Ian K. Edwards
Ian K. Edwards

EXHIBIT A

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND AGREEMENT TO BE BOUND

I, _____ [print or type full name], of _____ [print or type full address], declare under penalty of perjury that I have read in its entirety and understand the Stipulated Protective Order that was issued by the United States District Court for the Central District of California on [date] in the case of *Clemmens et al. v. American Honda Motor Co., Inc.*, Case No. 2:24-cv-09728-ODW-SKx. I agree to comply with and to be bound by all the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order, and I understand and acknowledge that failure to so comply could expose me to sanctions and punishment in the nature of contempt. I solemnly promise that I will not disclose in any manner any information or item that is subject to this Stipulated Protective Order to any person or entity except in strict compliance with the provisions of this Order.

I further agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the United States District Court for the Central District of California for the purpose of enforcing the terms of this Stipulated Protective Order, even if such enforcement proceedings occur after termination of this action. I hereby appoint _____ [print or type full name] of _____ [print or type full address and telephone number] as my California agent for service of process in connection with this action or any proceedings related to enforcement of this Stipulated Protective Order.

Date: _____

City and State where sworn and signed: _____

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____